
SUSTAINABILITY

RATIONALE

With the aim to educate our students to become responsible citizens, The Patch Primary School aims to become a Sustainable School by reducing our ecological footprint through adopting sustainable practices in our everyday lives and by educating fellow Australians to follow the same path. We will achieve this by integrating sustainability into all areas of the curriculum and instilling a sense of ownership of and pride in improving the environment and the impact of our footprint on a national and global scale. We will lead the community by demonstrating exemplary practices in sustainable materials use, waste management, water and energy usage, and continue to develop the school grounds to promote biodiversity. The world our students will give to their children shall be the best they were personally able to give to them, and we as a school will do everything in our power to enable them to do so.

AIMS

An Environmental Educator shall continue to be employed to oversee and direct sustainability across the school. A Sustainability Co-Ordinator shall liaise with staff and community to keep all members of the school community informed and involved.

Energy:

- Reduce the use of energy consumption within the school
- Use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible
- Replace light fittings with sustainable LED lights wherever possible
- Include students in the process of developing and maintaining an Energy Efficient School.
- Reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.
- Record and track energy use in the school and conduct audits as required.

Waste:

- To minimise rubbish as much as possible.
- All classrooms to have systems in place to sort rubbish and recycle our waste as much as possible.
- To include the school community in the process of developing a Waste Wise school by making responsible choices around product use and promotion and materials selection (see Green Procurement Policy).
- Students take responsibility for disposing of food scraps, paper and rubbish in the appropriate way on a daily basis.
- To promote rubbish free lunches and reward those who participate regularly.
- To maintain and use the compost system and worm farms.

Biodiversity:

- To use the Habitat Census and Habitat Plan for future development of our school grounds.
- To utilise our school grounds and gardens to their full extent.
- To involve community members in the maintenance of the school grounds.

- For each year level to have ownership in the upkeep of an area in the school grounds.
- To develop and maintain a food and fibre garden and bush tucker trail to honour the First Peoples.

Water:

- To install and maintain water tanks for gardens and toilets
- To reduce the water consumption within the school.
- To use resources and equipment as efficiently as possible.
- To involve students and staff in the planning of water conservation initiatives.
- Assign students to monitor water usage and report wastage using the SWEP (School Water Efficiency Program) resources.

We aim to achieve the following goals and targets over the next three years:

1. To keep waste to landfill per student to below 0.3 cubic metres/year – Aspirational target: 70% reduction.
2. To keep use of main water per student to below 4 KL/year – Aspirational target 40% reduction.
3. To keep energy use and carbon dioxide emissions per student to below 400kWh/year, 1.4GJ, 0.6 tonnes carbon dioxide – Aspirational target: 50% reduction (long term – 80%)

IMPLEMENTATION

Our “School Environment Management Plan”, outlines the four resource modules we will undertake over the next three years. They are Biodiversity, Energy, Water and Waste (refer to SEMP for specific targets and progress). We shall continue our participation in the AUSSI Vic Resource Smart Schools program, Yarra Ranges Council Learning for Sustainability Program and their Environmental Educators Network.

Curriculum Focus:

- The environmental focus will continue through the Environmental Education program and related student groups (Gang Green, EarthKeepers) and also through the teaching of science and the inquiry units (Environment as throughline).

Energy:

- To promote a “switch off and save” policy for technological equipment, light and heating/cooling.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to energy.
- Students will investigate the best ways to conserve energy.
- Students will explore alternative forms of renewable energy

Waste:

- Students visit a landfill site and waste transfer station during their junior or middle years.
- To assign students to dispose of waste and recycled products daily in the appropriate manner
- To assign students to monitor rubbish free lunches and each term award the class who has the most rubbish free lunches..
- Monitors shall collect food waste daily and transfer it to the compost bins or worm farms.
- Students shall dispose of paper into recycling bins and ensure no contamination is evident.
- Use recycled paper for printers, photocopiers and toilets.

- Promote the reuse principle of paper in classrooms, staffroom and office.
- Discourage fundraisers that produce more plastic waste.
- Participate in initiatives that raise awareness, improve knowledge and develop better habits around waste and product use.

Biodiversity:

- Partner with local community groups and members to improve our school grounds (Landcare, other schools, local government)
- Involve community members in planting and maintaining our grounds and provide workshops on relevant skills and practices in sustainable landuse.
- Engage students and staff in the maintenance of our grounds.
- Grow and harvest a range of vegetables/herbs to be utilised in cooking classes and for take home rewards.

Water:

- To promote a “water-wise” turn off policy.
- Students to engage in units of work relating to water conservation.
- To assign students to monitor water usage and report wastage
- Plant drought-tolerant species as much as possible

Community Involvement:

We will encourage community participation in environmental projects undertaken as well as invite parents with expertise to help maintain and improve our school environment. We will also promote sustainable living through educating the school community through our students.

All people within our school will be informed and responsible for implementing these programs. The various committees in conjunction with the Principal will be responsible for keeping records and reporting on the outcomes and progress of each program to the whole school community, through school newsletters, school website and the annual report. The parties involved will provide reports to staff and School Council outlining the goals, aims, costing, savings and other relevant issues.

Triple Bottom Line Reporting:

The Sustainability Co-Ordinator will report to the School Council once a term and will provide feedback on sustainability practices within the school community; what is being done and what needs to be done. They will also report on the triple bottom line: the social, economic and environment impact of school sustainability practices.

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle

